(c) whether any recession has set in this industry in Karnataka;

(d) if so, the details thereof and the steps proposed to be taken to check the recession?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (DR. S. VENUGOPALACHARI) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) No study has been carried out to assess the impact of growth of floriculture on foodgrain production.

There has been substantial increase in foreign exchange earnings through export of floriculture products from Rs. 14.45 crores in 1991-92 to Rs. 60.14 crores in 1995-96.

(c) No, Sir.

(d) Does not arise.

Commission on Prisoners

3209. SHRI N.K. PREMCHANDRAN : Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have appointed any Commission to study the grievances being faced by the prisoners;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the Government propose to introduce any reforms for redressing the grievances of prisoners; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI MOHD. MAQBOOL DAR) : (a) to (d) 'Prisons' is a State subject as per Entry 4 of List II, State List of the Seventh Schedule to the Constitution of India. It is for the State Governments to look into the grievances of prisoners and to take necessary steps for redressal thereof as per the provisions of their Jail manuals. However, the Central Government on its part has appointed various Committees in the past and has continued its interaction with the State Governments in order to improve the lot of the prisons and prisoners. The Central Government has also been sending advisories and providing financial assistance to the State Governments to improve the prison infrastructure in the country.

Smuggling of Timber

3210. SHRI LAKSHMAN SINGH : Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government are aware of forest mafia operating in the country for illicit felling and smuggling of timber;

(b) if so, the number of such cases reported during the last three years;

(c) the number of persons arrested and punished by the courts; and

(d) the further steps proposed to be taken to make stringent rules in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (PROF. SAIFUDDIN SOZ) : (a) to (d) The information is being collected from the States and will be laid on the Table of the House.

Grant for Infrastructural Facilities

3211. SHRI KESHAB MAHANTA : Will the Minister of FOOD PROCESSING INDUSTRIES be pleased to state:

(a) whether any grant-in-aid was given to various organisations and private entrepreneurs of Assam towards part of the capital cost of ice plants, cold storage, refrigerated vehicles processing machineries etc. under the scheme for the development of infrastructural facilities for preservation and processing of fish during the Eighth Five Year Plan;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF FOOD PROCESSING INDUSTRIES (SHRI DILIP KUMAR RAY) : (a) No, Sir.

(b) In view of (a) above question does not arise.

(c) No complete proposal was received.

Voluntary Consumer Organisations

3212. SHRI MAHENDRA SINGH BHATI : Will the Minister of FOOD AND CONSUMER AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of Voluntary Consumer Organisations registered under the Societies Registration Act in various States; and

(b) the steps proposed to be taken to encourage more Voluntary Organisations in the rural areas of the country?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF FOOD AND CONSUMER AFFAIRS (SHRI RAGHUVANS PRASAD SINGH) : (a) This Ministry does not compile such information.

(b) Central Government has written to the State Governments to encourage the formation of Voluntary Consumer Organisations specially in rural and tribal areas at block level.